



## STAYING ACTIVE IN COLD WEATHER

When winter blows in, you can pull the blankets over your head and go back to sleep—or you can suit up and head out for an outdoor winter adventure! The American Heart Association offers these tips for working out in the cold of winter. There's no reason you need to take a break from physical activity when the temperature drops. In fact, exercising in cooler weather has some distinct advantages over working out in warmer weather.

### Tips to Keep in Mind

No heat and humidity to deal with. Winter's chill might even make you feel awake and invigorated.

You may be able to work out longer in cold weather—which means you can burn even more calories.

It's a great way to take in the sunlight (in small doses). Not only can light improve many people's moods, it also helps you get some vitamin D.

Exercise boosts your immunity during cold and flu season. Just a few minutes a day can help prevent simple bacterial and viral infections, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

### Stay Warm, Stay Safe

Staying warm and dry when heading out to exercise in cold weather is all about layers. A little preparation can keep you safe from cold weather hazards like hypothermia and frostbite.

Cold temperatures, strong winds and damp conditions (like rain and snow) steal your body heat. For example, according to the National Weather Service, a 30-degree day with 30-mile-an-hour wind feels like about 15 degrees. And if you get wet (from rain, snow or perspiration) that effect is only magnified. That's why layers of clothing are so important. They help trap the heat and form a kind of insulation against the elements.

Resist your instinct to start layering with cotton. Once cotton becomes wet with sweat or snow, the moisture is trapped and will actually make you feel colder (and heavier). For your first layer, you want something that pulls moisture away from your skin, like the moisture wicking fabrics used in high-performance sportswear. Next, add a layer of fleece; finally, top with a thin waterproof layer.

### Know the Signs

Hypothermia means the body temperature has fallen below 95 degrees Fahrenheit. It occurs when your body can't produce enough energy to keep the internal body temperature warm enough. It can kill you. Symptoms can include: lack of coordination, mental confusion, slowed reactions, slurred speech, cold feet and hands, shivering, and/or sleepiness. Children and the elderly may be at more risk because they may have limited ability to communicate or impaired mobility. Elderly people may also have lower subcutaneous fat and a diminished ability to sense temperature, so they can suffer hypothermia without knowing they're in danger.

### Bye-Bye, Couch Potato!

If the winter weather prevents you from getting outside, don't just reach for the remote. Make your time inside count. There are many ways to get physical activity indoors—no gym required. Hand weights or resistance bands are a great addition, but not necessary. Try a exercise video or have your own dance party. Any movement is better than none!

Source: [www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/fitness/getting-active/how-to-stay-active-in-cold-weather](http://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/fitness/getting-active/how-to-stay-active-in-cold-weather)

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